

Teens Teaching Teens Part 4: A Successful Project Indeed!

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As you know if you have been reading this blog over the spring, the Food Bank's EATWISE nutrition education interns completed a project to raise awareness for healthy breakfasts at our high schools this year – with in-class presentations, marketing materials, social media efforts and more. We wanted this project to make a real difference on our peers' health and diets, but how would we define success and know that we were actually influencing our peers?

To me, if my peers could demonstrate that they learned something and thought the information was useful, then this would be a successful spring project. I realized the spring project made a difference when I talked to my friend Ryan. He was excited to try and make one of the healthful breakfast recipes we presented. My other friend, Kaitlin, even told me that she was eating breakfast more often and was careful to make healthier breakfast choices. To see my friends actually learn something and make changes to how they eat because of what we presented was very rewarding.

The presentation itself was also an interesting experience for me. It was different than just presenting a paper . Our EATWISE breakfast project included full-fledged presentations - with scripts, a slideshow, games and information used to educate others about breakfast. The experience itself was like viewing a kaleidoscope, as I was able to experience what it is like to be a teacher and having to expect that anything could occur.

For me, one of the most memorable parts of the presentation was when we informed a class that skipping breakfast could actually cause you to gain weight rather than lose weight. (That's because ...) Seeing the surprise and intrigue on their faces was priceless. Overall, being able to reach more than 900 of our peers, through in-class presentations, school announcements, marketing materials and social media content – all of which we created ourselves - gives me and my fellow interns a great sense of accomplishment. Our project showed how one can change their perspective so slightly and get something worthwhile in exchange.